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4 MAY 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service

FROM: [redacted] 25X1
Acting Chief, Operations Group

SUBJECT: Recommendation for Pilot Video Product

REFERENCES: A. Memo to D/FBIS fm. DD/SOVA, dtd. 5 Apr 88, Subj: Soviet TV Project

B. Memo to C/OPS fm. C/MOD, dtd. 18 Mar 88, Subj: Television Production White Paper

C. C/E&PS Lognote, dtd. 18 Feb 88, re D/FBIS meeting with DD/SOVA

1. Recommendation: Operations Group recommends your approval for Monitoring Operations Division Television Center to begin production of a pilot weekly video product consisting of a 5- to 8-minute videotape summarizing the top one or two news stories from Vremya newscasts of the preceding week. The proposed videotape will be a scripted, edited, finished video product, not simply a translation of news items.

2. Objectives: Our objectives in producing this pilot product, which would be responsive to at least one of SOVA's stated requirements, are:

To provide a product quickly.

To provide a product without making major new resource commitments in the short run.

To provide a product of high technical quality that will not turn off its intended audience. We believe that producing a "rough," technically amateurish video product would be self-defeating in the long run, as it would harm our credibility with current and potential consumers of our video production.

Perhaps most important, to give us -- and our consumers -- something concrete to evaluate and refine.

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3. Limitations: The intended audience for the proposed videotape is SOVA managers, not analysts. It will be an information tool for managers, similar to Media Notes, not a substantive product for analysts to use in intelligence production. Such a substantive product would be heavily manpower intensive and would have to be produced by Analysis Group, with technical support from MOD and translation support from Production Group and/or London Bureau. Eventually this may well be what we want to shoot for.

4. Resource Requirements: The essential resource lacking is a full-time, in-house scriptwriter to produce scripts from raw material and to provide narration. MOD has identified a potential candidate to fill this gap. He is a fully cleared staff contractor currently working with the DI Television Center. He is paid at the senior GS-13 salary level. With your approval, MOD proposes discussing the possibility of a short-term contract with this individual on an independent contractor basis while we evaluate the utility of this product.

MOD already has on board an experienced video editor. Additionally, MOD has reassigned one of its television operators to video editing.

MOD proposes to produce the pilot videotape using the above personnel. The selection of topics for each week's tape will be driven by the news itself, and the script will be produced using items already processed from Vremya, Moscow Domestic Service and TASS. Final production would take place on Thursday, with delivery of the product to consumers on Friday morning. The tape could either be delivered in hard copy or broadcast on the Headquarters television grid.

On occasion, it may be necessary to call on Production Group for ad hoc translation support. We believe it would also be wise to have AG review each week's script before production, just as AG does with Foreign Press Notes.

The Television Center's current equipment is adequate to begin production. Approximately $50K of new hardware and software would be required for more sophisticated productions.

5. Implications: This project, if successful, will likely give rise to more consumer requests for video products. Substantive, analytical productions would require substantial Analysis Group and Production Group manpower. Expanding the service to other geographic

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areas would require additional video editors, additional equipment, additional space, and additional scriptwriter/narrator support. This also implies additional ESG technical and engineering support for MOD.

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APPROVED:

[redacted] * 24 May 88

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Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service Date

Scriptwriter approved and effort limited to "executive summary" type programs until further dialogue with SOVA can be concluded.

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C/MOD/FBIS/ [redacted] (2 May 88) 25X1

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